

**REMARKS**

Applicants and Applicants' attorney express appreciation to the Examiner for the courtesies extended during the recent telephonic interview held on May 6, 2007. Reconsideration and allowance for the above-identified application are now respectfully requested. Claims 8-18 are pending, wherein claims 8 and 15 have been amended.

As discussed and tentatively agreed to during the telephonic interview, the applied art neither teaches nor suggests a method that includes the combination of limitations recited in claim 8 as amended. More specifically, none of Alani et al. (US 4,390,027), Rudiger et al. (US 4,887,611), Gerber (US 5,325,864) or Counter (US 3,837,340), taken alone or in combination, teach or suggest using an assay plate having the combination of features recited in claim 8 in the manner recited. For example, none of Alani et al., Rudiger et al., Gerber or Counter disclose an assay plate having a flexible substrate and a rigid raised pad having a substantially planar sample receiving surface configured for receiving a sample thereon, a sharp edge at a junction between a sidewall coupling the sample receiving surface to the substrate surface, and no wall extending beyond and surrounding said sample receiving surface. Each of Alani et al., Rudiger et al., Gerber disclose circumferential walls enclosing, and thereby, obstructing contact with, the sample receiving surface. Counter, on the other hand, discloses a flexible cushioned surface upon which a virus containing vaccine is placed.

Moreover, the cited art fails to disclose or suggest providing a flexible substrate as claimed, depositing a sample on the sample receiving surface, attaching the flexible substrate onto an animal in order for the sample to contact skin of the animal, and performing an experiment on the animal in response to an effect caused by the sample.

In view of the foregoing, Applicants submit that claim 8 is patentable over the art of record. Dependent claims 9-15 are likewise patentable and recite additional limitations that further distinguish over the art.

Support for claiming a rigid raised pad is found in the Application at page 9, lines 5-6 and 10-11 (which recites materials, such as metal, glass and ceramic, which are known to be rigid, and plastic, which can be rigid depending on its composition and material properties). Support for performing an experiment on an animal in response to an effect caused by the sample is found at page 4, line 15 of the Application (disclosing a transdermal experiment) and page 12, lines 32 (disclosing exemplary experiments on a mouse, rat, bird, dog, horse, cow, pig, goat,

rabbit, monkey, ape or human, such as measuring a biological response, degree of wheal and flare, infiltration of white blood cells, cellular responses, or skin biopsy).

Claims 16-18 were deemed to be allowable over the art of record.

In the event the Examiner finds any remaining impediment to a prompt allowance of this application that may be clarified through a telephone interview or which may be overcome by Examiner amendment, the Examiner is requested to contact the undersigned attorney.

Dated this 12<sup>th</sup> day of May 2008.

Respectfully submitted,



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